

# FGC 1 Petition to the California Fish and Game Commission for Regulation Change

**Submitted to the California Fish and Game  
Commission**

**Pursuant to Title 14, Section 671 –  
Restricted Species List**



Tracking Number: ( \_\_\_\_\_ )

To request a change to regulations under the authority of the California Fish and Game Commission (Commission), you are required to submit this completed form to: California Fish and Game Commission, (physical address) 1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1320, Sacramento, CA 95814, (mailing address) P.O. Box 944209, Sacramento, CA 94244-2090 or via email to FGC@fgc.ca.gov. Note: This form is not intended for listing petitions for threatened or endangered species (see Section 670.1 of Title 14).

Incomplete forms will not be accepted. A petition is incomplete if it is not submitted on this form or fails to contain necessary information in each of the required categories listed on this form (Section I). A petition will be rejected if it does not pertain to issues under the Commission’s authority. A petition may be denied if any petition requesting a functionally equivalent regulation change was considered within the previous 12 months and no information or data is being submitted beyond what was previously submitted. If you need help with this form, please contact Commission staff at (916) 653-4899 or FGC@fgc.ca.gov.

**SECTION I: Required Information.**

*Please be succinct. Responses for Section I should not exceed five pages*

**1. Person or organization requesting the change (Required)**

Name of primary contact person: Pat Wright  
Address: [4515 Panorama Dr, La Mesa, CA 91941.]  
Telephone number: [619-757-7426.]  
Email address: [pat@pan.sdcxmail.com.]

**2. Rulemaking Authority (Required) - Reference to the statutory or constitutional authority of the Commission to take the action requested:**

The California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) has the statutory authority to regulate the classification of animals under California Fish and Game Code § 2118, which governs the importation, transportation, and possession of wild animals. However, this authority is constrained by California Fish and Game Code §§ 2116 and 2116.5, which define wild animals as those not normally domesticated in California or elsewhere.

The Commission previously removed *Bubalus bubalis* (Asian water buffalo) from the prohibited species list after receiving scientific input confirming their domestic status and regulatory alignment with livestock laws. Given the well-documented domestic status of ferrets (*Mustela putorius furo*), the Commission has the authority to amend regulations accordingly. Furthermore, the California Administrative Procedure Act (APA) (California Government Code §§ 11340.6 and 11340.7) requires the Commission to consider petitions fairly and provide reasoned justifications for regulatory decisions.

**• Overview (Required) - Summarize the proposed changes to regulations:**

This petition requests that the California Fish and Game Commission amend Title 14, Section 671 of the California Code of Regulations to remove domestic ferrets (*Mustela putorius furo*) from the list of restricted species. This change would align California’s regulations with the federal government and 48



other states **[36†source]** , recognizing ferrets as domesticated animals. This classification update would:

Facilitate responsible ownership;

Eliminate unnecessary criminalization;

Allow proper regulation under existing pet laws.

### **3. Rationale (Required) - Describe the problem and the reason for the proposed change**

#### **1. Domestic Ferrets Are Not Wild Animals**

- **Scientific Consensus:** Ferrets have been bred in captivity for over **2,000 years** and are recognized as domestic by the **USDA, AVMA, and 48 other states** **[31†source]** .

- **Legal Definitions:** Under **California Fish and Game Code §§ 2116 and 2116.5**, a wild animal is one that is “not normally domesticated in this state or elsewhere.” Ferrets **do not meet this definition** **[28†source]** .

- **California Civil Code § 655** explicitly states that “there may be ownership of all domestic animals,” reinforcing that ferrets fall under this classification **[30†source]** .

#### **2. No Evidence of Environmental Risk**

- **No Established Feral Populations:** Decades of illegal ownership in California have produced **no feral populations**, consistent with findings from **peer-reviewed studies** **[38†source]** .

- **Environmental Reports Disprove Risk:** A **2010 Fish and Game-commissioned report**, finally peer-reviewed in 2020, **found no evidence** that domestic ferrets pose a unique threat **[27†source]** .

#### **3. Public Safety and Responsible Ownership**

- **Minimal Bite Risk:** Ferrets bite at significantly **lower rates than dogs or cats** **[29†source]** .

- **Vaccination and Health Measures:** Ferrets can be **vaccinated against rabies**, as confirmed by **CDC protocols** **[33†source]** .

- **Regulation Through Licensing:** Legalization would allow oversight, including **licensing and vaccination requirements**, rather than fostering an **unregulated underground market**.

#### **4. Regulatory Precedent: Asian Water Buffalo Legalization**

- **Similar Reclassification Process:** The **Commission removed the Asian water buffalo from the prohibited species list** after confirming domestic status **[40†source]** .

- **Application to Ferrets:** Ferrets have long been classified as **domestic animals**, supported by extensive **scientific literature** **[31†source]** . Amending **Title 14, Section 671** would ensure **consistency in domestic animal classification**.

#### **5. Lack of Justification for Ferret Classification & Commission Obstruction**

- A **Public Records Act request** revealed **no hearings, studies, or documents** justifying why ferrets were originally classified as wild and detrimental.

- **Video evidence from the August 22, 2023, Fish and Game Commission Meeting** (<https://youtu.be/eY4oXI2Uq2k?si=kiOn0DfICci2VCGzm>) confirms that:

- The Commission **falsely claimed** that an **EIR must be funded by proponents**, despite multiple attempts by petitioners to begin the process.

- The Commission has **ignored certified correspondence** confirming readiness for an **EIR process**.



## SECTION II: Optional Information

The continued classification of domestic ferrets as wild and detrimental lacks scientific, legal, and regulatory justification. California remains the only state enforcing this outdated prohibition. By updating the regulations to reflect current scientific knowledge and aligning with established regulatory practices, the Commission can correct this long-standing misclassification while ensuring responsible ownership.

4. **Date of Petition:** [Feb 26, 2025.]
  
5. **Category of Proposed Change**
  - Sport Fishing
  - Commercial Fishing
  - Hunting
  - Other, please specify: [Reclassification of domestic ferrets under Title 14, Section 671..]
  
6. **The proposal is to:** *(To determine section number(s), see current year regulation booklet or <https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs>)*
  - Amend Title 14 Section(s): [This option. ]
  - Add New Title 14 Section(s): [Click here to enter text.]
  - Repeal Title 14 Section(s): [Click here to enter text.]
  
7. **If the proposal is related to a previously submitted petition that was rejected, specify the tracking number of the previously submitted petition**
  - #2016-008
  - #2016-031
  - #2019-018
  - Or  Not applicable.
  
8. **Effective date:** If applicable, identify the desired effective date of the regulation. If the proposed change requires immediate implementation, explain the nature of the emergency: [Click here to enter text.]
  
10. **Supporting documentation:** Identify and attach to the petition any information supporting the proposal including data, reports and other documents:
  - Exhibit A: Fish and Game Code § 2116
  - Exhibit A2: Fish and Game Code § 2116.5
  - Exhibit B: Proof of Domestic Status
  - Exhibit C: California Civil Code § 655
  - Exhibit D: Ferret Bite Statistics
  - Exhibit D2: Ferret Rabies Vaccine
  - Exhibit D2 Explanation
  - Exhibit E: Original Environmental Report
  - Exhibit E2: Peer-Reviewed Environmental Report
  - Exhibit E2 Explanation
  - Exhibit E3: Impacts of Domesticated Ferrets Peer Reviewed
  - Exhibit F: Legal Status of Ferrets in 48 States
  - Exhibit G: Lack of Feral Ferret Populations



Exhibit H: FGC Response Letter (10-day Wright P.)

Exhibit I: Staff Summary for October 19, 2016

**11. Economic or Fiscal Impacts:** Identify any known impacts of the proposed regulation change on revenues to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, individuals, businesses, jobs, other state agencies, local agencies, schools, or housing:

The prohibition of domestic ferrets in California has created unnecessary economic burdens on residents, small businesses, and government agencies. The legalization of ferrets would have several **positive economic impacts**:

**Revenue Generation for the State**

Licensing fees, similar to dog and cat ownership, could generate significant revenue.

Taxes from pet-related sales, including ferret food, cages, bedding, and veterinary services, would contribute to California's economy.

**Increased Business for Pet Stores & Veterinary Clinics**

Currently, California pet stores are unable to legally sell ferret-related products, **forcing residents to purchase them from out-of-state vendors**.

Veterinary clinics are already treating ferrets illegally owned in the state, but **legalization would allow them to openly provide services, increasing revenue**.

**Reduction in Law Enforcement & Legal Costs**

Enforcement of ferret bans wastes **government resources**, including time spent on confiscation and prosecution.

Eliminating the ban would **reduce legal and administrative costs** associated with enforcing the restriction.

**Consumer Protection & Safety**

Legalizing ferrets would **ensure proper regulation of breeding and sales**, leading to **higher animal welfare standards**.

**Microchipping and vaccination programs** could be implemented to protect both ferrets and the public.

**Tourism & Relocation Incentives**

Many prospective residents and businesses **avoid moving to California due to restrictive pet laws**.

Ferret legalization would remove a barrier for thousands of pet owners who currently **face fines or eviction for owning a domesticated pet legal in 48 other states**.

**Conclusion**

The continued restriction of domestic ferrets is **economically inefficient and harmful to California businesses**. Legalization would generate new revenue streams, reduce enforcement costs, and improve consumer protection while aligning the state with national standards.

**12 Forms:** If applicable, list any forms to be created, amended or repealed:

[Click here to enter text. ]

**SECTION 3: FGC Staff Only**

Date received: [Click here to enter text. ]



FGC staff action:

- Accept - complete
- Reject - incomplete
- Reject - outside scope of FGC authority

Tracking Number

Date petitioner was notified of receipt of petition and pending action: \_\_\_\_\_ |

Meeting date for FGC consideration: \_\_\_\_\_ |

FGC action:

- Denied by FGC
- Denied - same as petition \_\_\_\_\_ |

Tracking Number

- Granted for consideration of regulation change